



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Conservation Across America

Pasture & Hayland Planting

Job Sheet – 512



Texas A&M Grass Images, Bioinformatics Working Group; Photo from Forage 5th Ed. CD Companion.

SWITCHGRASS

DESCRIPTION: Switchgrass is a tall, robust, perennial grass that grows from two to six feet tall. It grows in colonies from creeping, scaly rhizomes. Stems are tough and hard. Leaves are flat, wide, and long.

VARIETIES: Alamo switchgrass

PLANTING DATES: 2/15-5/15

SEEDBED PREPARATION: Offset or tandem disk land 3 to 6 inches deep according to soil condition. Allow land to firm from rainfall, cultipacking or rolling. A well prepared, weed-free firm seedbed is important for a successful grass stand.

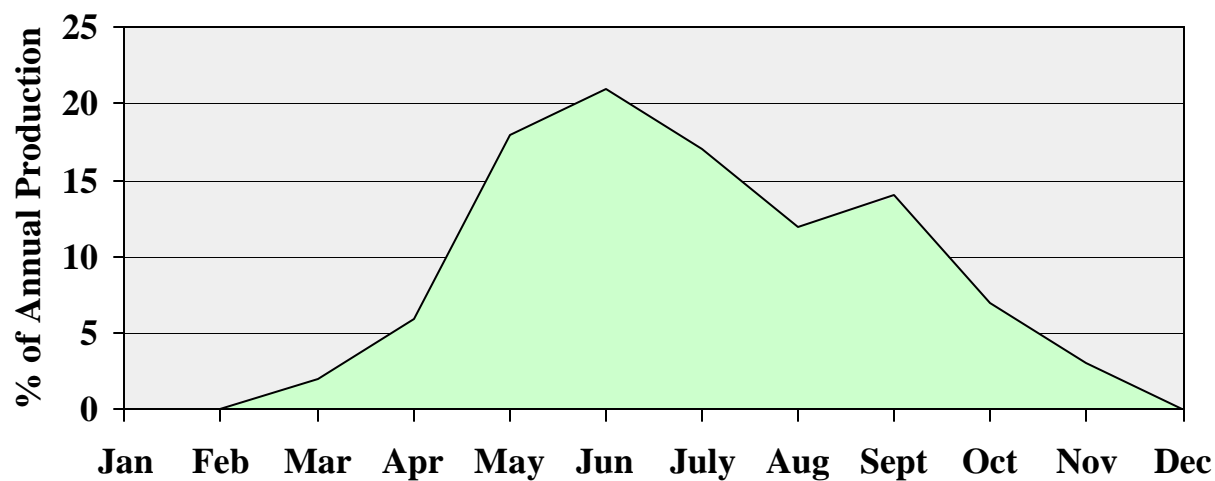
FERTILIZER AND LIME: Fertilizer and lime should be applied at rates recommended by a recent soil test. Fertilizer should be applied prior to planting and worked into the soil.

PLANTING METHODS: Seed may be drilled with a grass seed drill or broadcast with a broadcast seeder. The soil should be firmed by rolling with

press wheels, cultipacker, or rollers immediately after seeding.

MANAGEMENT: Switchgrass seedlings are sensitive to weedy competition. Weeds may be controlled by applying approved herbicides or by mechanical means. Do not apply chemicals before seedlings reach 4-5 leaf stage of growth. Do not graze before plants are well established. Do not mow or graze below 8 inches in height. Heavy grazing will severely damage the grass stand. Defer grazing is mid September until frost to permit grass to make seed and develop a vigorous root system for next season growth. The standing forage may be grazed down to approximately 8 inches in height after the first killing frost.

Growth Curve for Switchgrass



Actual growth is dependent upon local climate and seasonal variations in temperature and rainfall. Growth curve assumes adequate fertility based on soil test recommendation.

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